

focus on *Fish & Wildlife*

Hoosier waterfowl hunting season outlook ***More wild wings to be seen across Hoosier skies***



Waterfowlers should see a marked increase in many species of migrating ducks and geese this season.

Despite the less than favorable wetland habitat conditions across the state last year, Hoosier waterfowlers managed to bag an all-time record harvest of 116,100 ducks. Habitat conditions have rebounded in 2000 and moisture levels are back to normal across the state and most of the Midwest. This is good news for migrating waterfowl. Habitat conditions on breeding grounds in the Great Lakes states, Manitoba and much of Ontario (the areas where many of Indiana's migrating ducks come from) were generally good. Southern Ontario experienced heavy thunderstorms in May and drier than normal conditions this summer, which likely had a negative effect on duck nesting. Overall, 2000 was another great year for waterfowl production. Although the estimated breeding population of waterfowl is slightly lower than last year, the total number of ducks still exceeds the numbers seen during the banner years of the '70s.

According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service statistics, mallard populations are estimated at 9.5 million (12 percent below last year), but 27 percent above the long-term average. The fall flight of the mid-continent mallard

population (which includes birds from the traditional surveyed pothole area as well as Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin) is predicted to be lower than in 1999. Blue-winged and green-winged teal are at record high levels; shovelers and redheads are at their third highest levels since 1955; gadwall, northern shovelers and redheads are at levels similar to last year and well above their long-term averages. American wigeon and canvasback numbers are similar to last year. However, pintails and scaup remain below their long-term averages.

The spring population of Canada geese in Indiana was estimated at 121,300, a 36 percent increase from 1999. Similarly, the spring count of Mississippi Valley Population (MVP) of Canada geese increased 8 percent from last year and was estimated at 1.05 million birds. The estimated population of Southern James Bay (SJB) Canada geese declined by 35 percent from the 1999 estimate. The proportion of breeding pairs in both the SJB and MVP populations decreased this year, which implies lower productivity for these flocks in 2000. Nonetheless, the MVP population is above goal and the increase in Indiana's flock will allow for more days in the field to pursue Canada geese this year across most of the state.

Prepared by Melody Miller, waterfowl biologist

Topics this issue...

Hunting managed marshes

Administrative rule proposals

Pete Meyer – he keeps on going

Fur crafts

Director of *Fish & Wildlife*

Wildlife diversity—we're making progress



I want to give you an update on the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA). After the bill passed the House by a three to one margin, a Senate committee recommended its approval by a 13 to 7 vote.

Senator Evan Bayh voted for CARA as a member of the committee. Senator Richard Lugar supports CARA and intends to vote for it in the Senate.

Senator Frank Murkowski said, "CARA ensures that as this country depletes its non-renewable resources of oil and gas, the moneys earned from those resources are reinvested in all 50 states to renew, refurbish and recreate."

Max Peterson, executive vice-president of the International Association of Fish and

Wildlife Agencies based in Washington, D.C. said, "We haven't seen this type of funding in the last 50 years. When it passes, it will be landmark legislation. We'll look back in 15 years and wonder why we didn't do it sooner."

"Efforts aimed at preserving wildlife may be the most visible and effective part of CARA. Currently, we really don't have money devoted to monitoring nongame species. We know that many are in decline because we continue to add them to the threatened and endangered species lists. But a preventive approach—studying species and protecting their habitat—would be far more effective than waiting until they become endangered before we act. Moreover, CARA pays heed to growing enthusiasm for outdoor pursuits. Wildlife observation is now the fastest-growing outdoor activity. It's becoming a greater and greater part of the outdoor recreational experience," Peterson said.

Currently, Congress is in recess. However, the Indiana coalition is working hard to urge Congress to act on CARA before the sessions ends early in October.

Momentum for passing CARA continues to build, but the bill still has some hurdles to overcome. Once CARA passes, funds would become available to states with acceptable plans by October 2001.

Title III, the conservation and restoration title of the bill, provides funding for wildlife conservation, wildlife related recreation and conservation education. The final version of the bill may look somewhat different from the compromise bill that now exists, but plans continue to be developed, so Indiana will be ready when CARA passes.

CARA is the greatest opportunity for wildlife in our time. Just as Pittman-Robertson and Dingle-Johnson legislation benefits both game and nongame animals, CARA will likewise benefit all animals. Indiana's natural heritage is the envy of many states, with CARA we can protect our great Hoosier wildlife heritage.

Gary Doxtater

Mission

To manage fish and
wildlife for present
and future
generations,

balancing ecological, recreational and
economic benefits.



Focus on Fish & Wildlife is a quarterly publication from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife. *Focus on Fish & Wildlife* seeks to educate sportsmen and women, conservationists, wildlife recreationists and all Hoosiers on topics related to the management of Indiana's fish and wildlife resources.

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If you have questions, please write to the above address or call (317) 232-4080.

Visit the DNR
Division of Fish & Wildlife website:
[www.ai.org/dnr/fishwild/
index.html](http://www.ai.org/dnr/fishwild/index.html)



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focus on

Administrative rule change proposals

Rule change timeline

1. Rule Change Comments

Comments were collected at open house meetings in March 2000 and at the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Committee quarterly meeting in July 2000, to find what changes people would like to see to hunting, trapping, fishing and other wildlife associated rules.

2. Comments

Reviewed comments were considered by fish and wildlife managers in developing proposed rule changes.

3. DNR Proposes Changes

DNR proposes rule changes in this issue.

4. Comment at Open Houses

Tell us what you think about DNR's proposed changes at open house meetings in late Oct. 2000.

5. Rules Revised

Fish and wildlife managers will revise proposed rules based on public comment

6. Preliminary Adoption

The DNR will preliminarily adopt proposed administrative rule changes in Feb. 2001

7. Public Hearing

May 2001

8. Final Adoption

Final rules adopted by Natural Resources Commission – June 2001

9. New Rules

Effective late 2001 or early 2002

Take a look at the proposed rule changes on the next few pages. These changes were proposed by outdoor enthusiasts, biologists and conservation officers to improve the effectiveness and enforcement of Indiana laws regarding fish and wildlife.

At this point, these rules are only proposed. DNR officials have not made any steps to adopt these rules – they are simply ideas that are open to comment.

The timeline at left briefly describes the rule change process. Keep tabs on the process on-line at www.state.in.us/dnr/fishwild/index.htm. You can also get e-mail updates on the process by signing up for Wild Bulletin (see back cover).

Let Indiana's fish and wildlife managers know what you think about these changes by attending open house meetings scheduled for late October (page 7) or by writing to:

Rule Change Comments
Div. of Fish and Wildlife
402 W. Washington, W273
Indianapolis, IN 46204

It's important to comment not only on rules you oppose, but also changes that you support. Make sure that rule changes you support are adopted by making your opinion known.

Fishing

Establish an 18-inch minimum size limit and a daily bag limit of one for brown trout at the Oliver Lake chain in LaGrange County (Oliver, Olin and Martin lakes)

The Northeastern Indiana Trout Association is supplementing the DNR's rainbow trout stocking program at the Oliver Lake chain with annual

stockings of brown trout. The goal is to enhance the quality of the trout fishery by providing the opportunity to catch larger brown trout. The daily trout bag limit would remain at five, but only one could be a brown trout.

Place a 12-15 inch slot size limit on largemouth bass at Ferdinand State Forest Lake in Dubois County

Bass abundance has become excessive at this lake, slowing bass growth and bluegill production. The slot limit is a proven technique for rebalancing such lakes, resulting in better bass growth and better bluegill fishing.

Replace an existing 12-15 inch slot size limit with a 14-inch minimum size limit on largemouth bass at Westwood Run Lake in Henry County

The slot size limit has been effective in reducing bass overabundance and improving the growth and abundance of bluegill and redear sunfish. A 14-inch size limit is now needed to maintain a balanced fishery at the current level.

Establish a 14-inch minimum size limit on walleye and hybrid walleye (saugeye) at Sullivan Lake in Sullivan County

Sullivan Lake was originally exempted from the statewide walleye/saugeye size limit because of a research project to determine if walleye would survive and grow as well as saugeye at this lake. The research is now complete (saugeyes yielded the best fishery) and the statewide limit should be applied, as favored by over 93 percent of the anglers interviewed at Sullivan during a 1998 angler survey.

Remove the 10-fish daily bag limit from channel catfish at Turtle Creek Reservoir in Sullivan County

Catfish have increased dramatically to the point they could negatively affect the rest of the fishery. Liberalizing catfish harvest is recommended to bring catfish abundance back into balance.

(Continued on page 4)

Administrative rule change proposals

(Continued from page 3)

Require that identifying characteristics remain on fish while an angler is still engaged in the day's fishing

The purpose of this proposal is to allow effective enforcement of size and bag limits by prohibiting the practice of completely filleting or otherwise obliterating the identity and size of fish during a fishing trip.

Allow a single daily bag limit for yellow perch on Lake Michigan, even if the angler holds licenses for more than one Lake Michigan state

Because of proximity to other Lake Michigan states, anglers on Lake Michigan can currently possess more than Indiana's daily catch limit for yellow perch on a single trip. This seriously compromises efforts to enforce Indiana's bag limit. The proposed change would further protect this species, which is struggling to recover from a major population decline.

Allow use of cast nets anywhere on the Ohio River

Indiana currently prohibits use of all sport fishing gear except handpoles and lines within 200 yards of dams on the Ohio River. Kentucky allows use of cast nets anywhere on the Ohio. This proposal would correct this inconsistency.

After a daily bag limit has been reached, allow an angler to release a fish and replace it with another provided that the released fish was held in approved holding conditions and is healthy at the time of release

The fish "sorting" rule was established years ago when most fish were held on stringers or by other means that compromised fish health. Under those conditions, this rule made sense because it prevented the wasteful practice of releasing a dead or dying fish to comply with a bag limit if a bigger one was caught later. Today, with recirculating, aerated live wells,

fish can be held for a reasonable period and released in good health. The existing sorting rule places undue restrictions upon anglers, particularly during fishing tournaments. This proposal would allow fish sorting if the angler is using a properly designed and functioning live well.

Hunting

Reduce the antlered deer bag limit to one per hunter per year

Responding to requests from many deer hunters, DNR biologists propose reducing the antlered deer bag limit to one per year. Many believe this may increase the number of large, trophy bucks.

Allow the use of .410 shotgun for deer hunting

Surrounding states Ohio, Kentucky, and Michigan all allow .410 shotguns for deer hunting. This gun provides adequate stopping power to effectively kill a deer.

Start the urban deer zone season on Sept. 15 and increase the bag limit to three antlerless deer and one deer of either sex

Urban deer zones have been established to encourage more deer harvest in the areas where deer are difficult to control. This rule change will increase incentive to harvest deer in these areas. Urban deer zones provide communities with options for deer management.

Allow use of antlerless deer permits during early bow season

This change will allow bow hunters to harvest additional antlerless deer during the early season when the majority of bow hunters prefer to hunt. The change will increase hunting opportunities and improve the DNR's ability to manage deer populations on a county-by-county basis.

Allow the use of crossbows throughout the entire archery season or at the start of firearms season (including urban deer zones)

Biologists believe that there will be little biological impact from allowing

use of crossbows during the entire deer season. The change creates more opportunity for those who prefer to use a crossbow for deer hunting.

Allow crossbow deer hunters to harvest a buck if they have not taken a buck with a bow

The current rule allows crossbow hunters to take only antlerless deer. The change will allow hunters to use a crossbow to fill their bag limit of one buck.

Prohibit the hunting of deer on land covered by game breeders license, taking of deer by fence building, and importing of deer from other states (excludes holders of licenses since Dec. 31, 2000)

This rule change will help prevent the spread of disease in both penned and wild herds of deer and other animals. This rule will also regulate the fencing of wild deer.

Allow the hunting of turkeys all day during turkey season

The current rule restricts turkey hunting after noon. The change would allow participation by people who cannot participate in early hours, such as kids in school. According to research from other states, the accidental kill of hens is not appreciably increased by lengthening hunting hours.

Allow turkey hunting statewide except for Rush and Shelby counties

This change will extend spring turkey hunting opportunities in Porter, Laporte, St. Joseph, Elkhart, LaGrange, Kosciusko, Noble, Dekalb, Whitley, Allen, Huntington, Wells, Carroll, and Howard counties as the result of naturally expanding populations and restoration work done from 1991 through 1999. Other east-central counties (e.g. Jay, Delaware, Madison, Tipton, etc.) will be open to hunting, although little turkey habitat exists in these areas. Rush and Shelby counties would remain closed to turkey hunting since birds were released there recently. Temporary protection is needed while the population ex-

pands into existing habitat. The rule change also simplifies the current turkey regulation by listing closed counties rather than all areas where turkey hunting is permitted.

Prohibit use of electrically powered or controlled turkey decoys

This change prohibits the use of electrically powered or controlled turkey decoys for turkey hunting. The use of these decoys is not in the spirit of fair chase and could potentially lead to safety problems since robotic decoys could be mistaken for game. This regulation would not affect the use of string or wind motion decoys.

Clarify turkey tagging requirement

The current rule on tagging turkeys does not clearly state when a hunter must attach a temporary tag on a harvested turkey. The revised rule requires a tag to be attached immediately after the turkey is taken and before it is transferred from the field.

Include the use of #7 shot with a 10, 12, 16, or 20 gauge shotgun or a muzzle loading shotgun for hunting wild turkey.

Size 7 shot has become more widely available in the last few years. It is an effective shot size that biologists feel should now be permitted.

Remove Dearborn, Jennings, Ripley counties from grouse hunting range

There are no grouse to hunt in these counties so there is no reason to include the areas in the allowable hunting range.

Endangered Species

Add the Whooping Crane to the state list of endangered species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing to establish a migratory population of federally endangered whooping cranes that would migrate through Indiana. State regulations require that federally listed species that regularly occur in Indiana are included on the state list of endangered species. The first whooping cranes may appear in Indiana during the fall of 2001.

Remove the Sandhill Crane from the state list of endangered birds

The eastern population that stages in Indiana as well as the local nesting population have increased to the point where the Nongame Bird Technical Advisory Committee recommends that this species no longer be considered a state endangered species. The nesting population in Indiana has increased to the extent of its historical breeding range and the migrating population exceeds 30,000 individuals. Sandhill cranes will still be protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Protection Act and cannot be hunted.

Housekeeping Changes

Change the definition of “sale” of native reptiles and amphibians to selling or serving reptiles and amphibians as part of a meal.

The definition of sale needs to allow for the barter, purchase, or trade, or the offer to sell, purchase or trade without the requirement that the reptile or amphibian be served as part of a meal by a restaurant or hotel. This will allow the Division of Law Enforcement to prosecute a person based solely on the sale or purchase of a native reptile or amphibian in Indiana. This is a grammatical change of two words that would clarify the original intention for this rule.

Include the “Inactive License Status” form as part of the administrative rule governing charter fishing

Existing charter fishing regulations currently require monthly catch reports, even after operators have stopped fishing for the year. This inconvenience has been addressed informally through a policy action but should be properly formalized in an established administrative rule.

Allow the use of paper permanent seals for tagging a deer at the check station.

This will allow more flexibility in the tagging materials used at deer check stations. This will also permit the DNR to reduce its cost of delivery of materials to check stations.

Replace the term “ice shanty” with “ice fishing enclosure” and allow reflective material strips to be used as an option to “reflectors”

In addition to traditional ice shanties, modern, portable ice fishing tents are in use. This change would update the existing regulation and clarify that reflective tape or strips are a lawfully acceptable means of marking the outside walls of the enclosure.

Require quarterly reports from holders of grass carp aquaculture permits regardless of whether or not the permittee stocked grass carp during the quarter

Grass carp, which are used for aquatic vegetation control, are only available from fish suppliers who hold an Indiana aquaculture permit. Existing rules direct permit holders to report stocking locations and numbers quarterly. This information is used by the DFW to track distribution of this exotic species to help ensure that it does not negatively impact public aquatic resources. Some permit holders submit reports late and/or only for quarters when they have stocked grass carp. This practice complicates tracking of the stockings and the full protection of public waters. This proposal would address this problem by clarifying that timely reports are required each quarter, even if no grass carp are stocked.

Classified Wildlife Habitat Program

A number of changes are proposed to clarify rules governing Indiana’s Classified Wildlife Habitat program.

Changes include definitions of terms, establishing a procedure for notification of non-compliance, establishing administrative review procedures, and definitions of minimum standards for wildlife management. For specific information on Classified Wildlife Habitat rule change proposals, contact Gary Langell, (812) 334-1137.

(Continued on page 6)

Administrative rule change open house

Attend one of these public open house meetings to have your questions answered on proposed rules or to comment on changes.

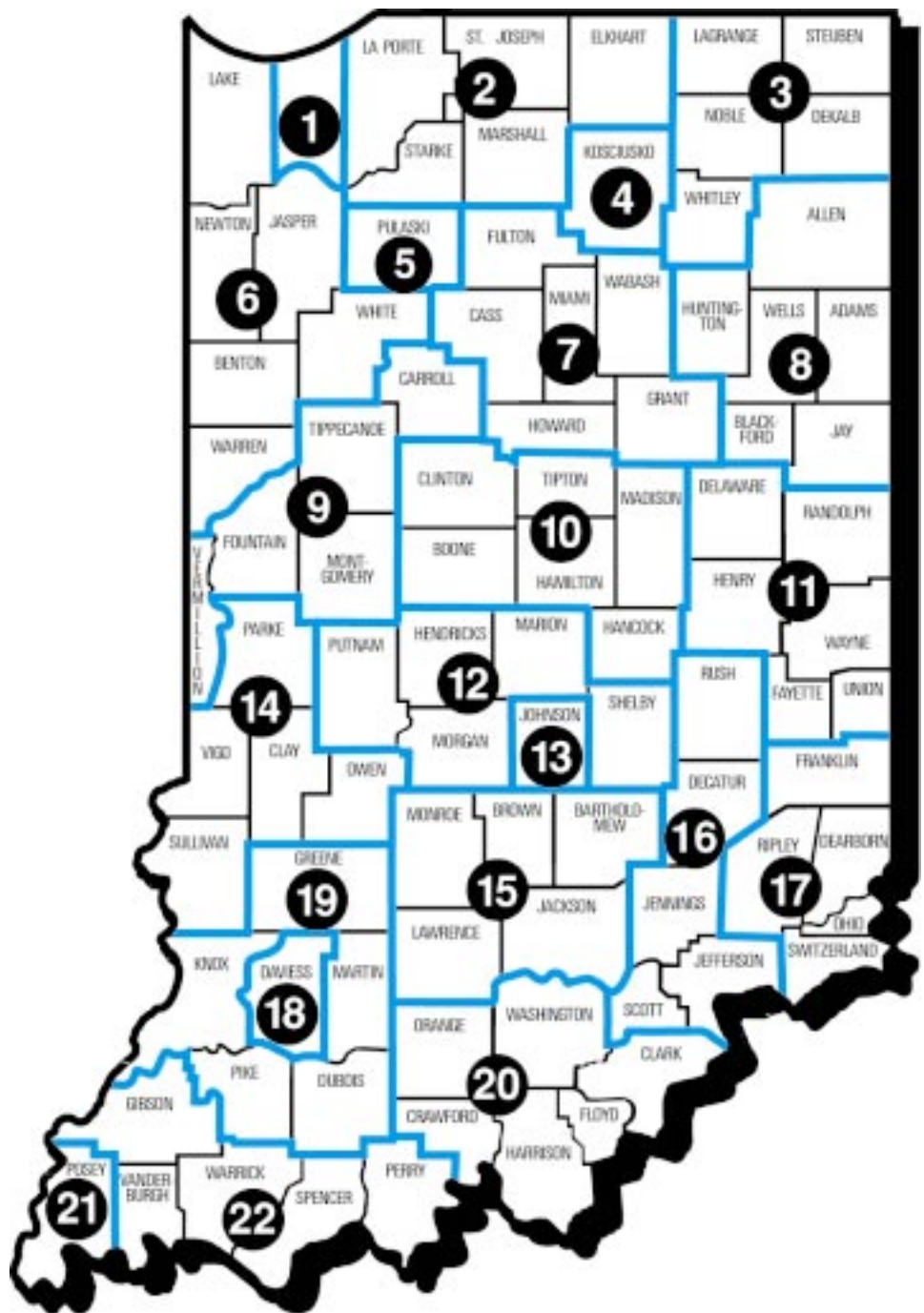
Let Indiana's fish and wildlife managers know what you think about proposed changes (pages 3-5) by attending open house meetings or by writing to:

Rule Change Comments
Div. of Fish and Wildlife
402 W. Washington, W273
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Written comments must be received by Nov. 15, 2000 for consideration.

It's important to comment not only on rules you oppose, but also changes that you think are necessary and that you support. Make sure that rule changes you support are adopted by making your opinion known.

Individuals who need reasonable modifications to participate in any of the open house meetings should contact Kim Dwigans, Division of Fish and Wildlife ADA coordinator at (317) 232-4186, or TDD at (317) 232-4080. A 72-hour advance notice is requested.



Open houses held in selected districts across the state

open house meetings

District open house locations

Open houses meet from 2 to 9 p.m.

District 2 - Oct. 23

Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Area
4320 W. Toto Road
North Judson, IN
2.5 miles west of S.R. 39 on Toto
Road between S.R. 8 and S.R. 10.
Rick Ward – (219) 896-3572

District 3 - Oct. 23

Best Western Inn, Bixler Room
US 6 East and Fairview Drive
Kendallville, IN
Al Van Hoey – (219) 367-2164

District 6 - Oct. 23

Willow Slough Fish and Wildlife Area
Headquarters
2042 S. 500 W.
Morocco, IN
Bob Porch – (219) 285-2704

District 7 - Oct. 23

Region 2 Headquarters
1124 N. Mexico Rd.
Peru, IN
Between Peru and Mexico on
Business 31 North about one mile
north of U.S. 24
Tom Hewitt – (765) 473-9324

District 8 - Oct. 26

Huntington Reservoir office
Huntington, IN
Follow S.R. 5 south out of Huntington
for about three miles. Office is on the
west side of the road.
John Olson – (317) 232-4102

District 9 - Oct. 26

Home Economics Building at the
Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds.
1401 Teal Road
Lafayette, IN
Teal Road is also S.R. 25 on the south
edge of Lafayette. Fairgrounds is on
the north side of the road about half
way between 9th and 18th streets.
Dean Zimmerman - (765) 463-0032

District 10 - Oct. 23

Ft. Harrison State Park office
Take I-465 on the east side of
Indianapolis to 56th Street exit. Take
56th St. east to Post Road. Turn left
on Post Road. Follow Post to "T"
(59th Street). Turn left and enter
park. Tell gate attendant you are
there for the open house.
John Olson – (317) 232-4102

District 11 - Oct. 26

Wilbur Wright Fish and Wildlife Area
2239 N. SR 103
New Castle, IN
Two miles north of New Castle on S.R.
103
John Russell – (765) 529-6319

District 12 - Oct. 23

Wayne Library
198 S. Girls School Road
Indianapolis, IN
Take I-465 on west side. Exit on
Rockville Road and go west to Girls
School Road. Go south on Girls
School. Library is two blocks down
on right.
Roger Kult – (812) 526-2051

District 14 - Oct. 26

Holiday Inn
US 41 South
Terre Haute, IN
Roger Stonebraker – (812) 268-0300

District 15 - Oct. 26

Brown County State Park
Abe Martin Lodge, Allison Room
Nashville, IN
Tell gate attendant you are there for
the open house.
Dan McGuckin – (812) 334-1137

District 16 - Oct. 24

Jennings County Library
North Vernon, IN
Library is located on the northwest
side of town. Take S.R. 3 north out of
North Vernon. Library is 1/2 mile
north of the intersection with S.R. 7
on the west side of S.R. 3 (behind the
Jay C Food Store).
Chris Grauel – (812) 352-8486

District 17 - Oct. 25

Southeastern Career Center,
Room A-105
US 50 west of town.
Versailles, IN
Ed Guljas – (812) 346-6888

District 19 - Oct. 26

Glendale Fish and Wildlife Area on
Sportsmen Road
R. R. 2, Box 300
Montgomery, IN
Bob Montgomery – (812) 644-7382

District 20 - Oct. 23

Farm Bureau Insurance Building
Paoli, IN
Just north of the square in Paoli on
SR 37, take the first right (east) on
Campbell Street. The building is
directly behind the post office.
John Olson – (317) 232-4102

District 22 - Oct. 23

Vanderburgh 4-H Center, Conference
Room
Evansville, IN
201 E. Boonville - New Harmony
Road, 1/2 mile west of US 41.
Jeff Tompson – (812) 789-2724

focus on *Waterfowl Management Plan*

The plan is working – wetland habitat is being restored

North America has 43 species of ducks, geese, and swans that depend on two or more countries on the continent to complete portions of their life cycles. In the mid-80s, people who love these waterfowl and other wetland dependent birds pondered their long-term future.

Wetlands were disappearing at an alarming rate in North America. In Indiana almost 90 percent of the original wetlands were gone. Other Midwestern states were similarly affected. All migratory water birds, many other migratory birds, and nearly one-half of all threatened and endangered species depend on wetlands and associated upland habitat for their survival. Were they doomed?

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan, signed in 1986 by both the United States and Canada, recognized the recovery and

perpetuation of waterfowl populations depended on restoring wetlands and associated ecosystems throughout the North American continent. Mexico became a partner in 1994. The plan established cooperative international efforts to reverse the declines in waterfowl populations and their habitats and it established population goals for the various species of ducks, geese and swans.

For ducks, the plan's goal is 62 million breeding birds and a fall migration of 100 million birds by 2000. These population goals were to be achieved through the completion of habitat projects in waterfowl areas of major concern.

There are three joint venture projects in Indiana. The Indiana Grand Kankakee Marsh Restoration Project is Indiana's contribution to the Upper Mississippi River/Great

Lakes Region Joint Venture, the Four Rivers Restoration Project in southwestern Indiana is the state's contribution to the Lower Mississippi Joint Venture. The third joint venture in the state is along the south shore of Lake Michigan in Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties where the Southern Lake Michigan Coastal Wetlands Project has a goal of acquiring, protecting and restoring wetland acres associated with Lake Michigan.

The goal of the Grand Kankakee project is to restore, protect, and enhance 26,500 acres of wetlands and associated uplands in the Kankakee River Basin and the goal of the Four Rivers project is to restore, protect, and enhance 30,000 acres to

provide connectivity with similar lands in Illinois, Missouri, and Kentucky.

How do these projects work in Indiana? Who participates? Where does the money come from to fund each project?

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan was very innovative – recognizing that efforts to achieve waterfowl population objectives go beyond the capability of government wildlife agencies. The plan required an unprecedented partnership of public and private organizations.

The plan issued a challenge to the conservation community to raise \$1.5 billion over a 15 year period. Many unconventional partnerships were established uniting local businesses, conservation clubs, local, state, and federal agencies, and individuals. For example, the partnership group for the Grand Kankakee project consists of a local realtor, a public utility company, two private waterfowl conservation groups, two county park agencies, the Indiana DNR, a local sports shop, a fish and game club, several business groups, the Izaak Walton League, and The Nature Conservancy. Funding comes from partnership funds and match funds in the form of grants from the North American Waterfowl Conservation Act.

The future for waterfowl and wetlands looks brighter than it has for a long time. More than 12,000 acres of land in Indiana have been restored, protected, or enhanced because of these partners, but reversing 200 years of habitat degradation is far from complete.

What can you do to help? Contact the Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife or your local North American group and get involved. You will be glad you did and so will your grandchildren.



All migratory water birds depend on wetlands and associated upland habitat for their survival.

Prepared by Richard Hudson, wildlife supervisor

focus on
Pete Meyer – he keeps on going

Venerable biologist helps wildlife since 1966 b.g. (before geese)

Before wild eagles soared overhead or turkeys flourished in Hoosier woods, and before otters frolicked or geese nested along Indiana streams, Pete Meyer began working at the new Hovey Lake Fish and Wildlife Area. Pete has seen a lot of Hoosier wildlife success stories unfold over the years — some hard-work successes we now take for granted.

Meyer was hired by Indiana to manage the hoped-for, soon-to-be waterfowl bonanza that would come with the flooding of Hovey Lake. The new Ohio River Uniontown Dam, completed in 1966, was backing water up into and expanding the Posey County oxbow lake.

“When I started, people rarely saw geese in Indiana, and deer were rare. In fact, geese were so rare I once transported two crippled geese from the southwestern tip of Indiana up to Pigeon River Fish and Wildlife Area in hopes they would help start another flock in northern Indiana,” says Meyer.

Now many game species like Canada geese, whitetail deer and wild turkey are thriving in the state. Pete hopes that the new CARA legislation sifting through the Senate helps Indiana’s other wildlife.

“A lot of neglected species will get a lot of help,” says Meyer. CARA stands for Conservation and Reinvestment Act. The proposed legislation would direct existing funds generated from offshore oil production toward helping wildlife.

After stints at Kingsbury and Pigeon River Fish and Wildlife areas, and as a north-central Indiana wildlife biologist, Meyer retired this summer from the DNR and is diving into year-round turtle research behind his home. He lives along Rain Creek in Fulton County with his wife Susan and his dog Money. Pete’s two grown sons fled the nest long ago. Pete explains the dog’s name “It’s the only way as a state biologist I would ever have money come to me.”

Pete’s backyard is littered with



A 1966 Evansville newspaper photograph of Hovey Lake Fish and Wildlife Area’s new biologist Pete Meyer. The photo caption eerily predicts Pete would “... plan bigger and better things.”



Pete Meyer glues a radio transmitter to a map turtle he trapped. His retirement from the DNR permits him time to work with college and university turtle researchers.

various colored survey flags marking turtle nests, burrows and soil temperature weather stations. Each nest has wrist-watch-sized sensor that records the temperature every 30 minutes. Pete is studying influences on emergence, hatching rates and overwintering success. “Some turtles froze last winter but still emerged in the spring,” says Meyer.

Pete is also working on several turtle basking trap prototypes. They are called basking traps because the turtles climb onto a black plastic floating ring to bask and are then knocked into a net in the middle of the ring by various methods.

Seven turtle species, including the rare Blanding’s turtle, have been trapped and marked with a notch code on their shells. Some turtles are also tracked with radio transmitters. Researchers from Miami University of Ohio, IUPUI Fort Wayne and Earlham College are helping Pete.

Prepared by John Maxwell, program director

focus on *Hunting waterfowl in a managed marsh*

Veteran shares waterfowl hunting tips and tricks

Hunting in a managed state waterfowl marsh requires a little homework and preparation to bring about an enjoyable trip. The main thing to remember is that you will be in direct competition with many other hunters for, not only a spot to hunt, but a chance to bag a duck or goose. Large numbers of hunters choose state managed areas due to excellent habitat and great numbers of migrating waterfowl staging on these areas. Another benefit is the relatively low cost per trip as compared to privately managed marshes.

Your first step should be to contact the properties you are interested in and gather information about their program. How do you go about obtaining a blind? What do you need to bring in the way of equipment, and what is provided? Are there shooting units or hunting schedule changes over time? Where on the property have hunters done the best in years past (not only overall, but within specific periods)? How does weather affect waterfowl use on that

particular area? Do they have resting areas? How are the hunting areas laid out?

Don't expect to show up in the dark for the first time with a flashlight and expect everything to go just right. Blinds and hunting sites are hidden from waterfowl for a reason, don't expect them to be easy to find in the dark. There is nothing that can increase hunting productivity more than first hand scouting.

One way to greatly increase your odds of getting a hunting spot is to take advantage of the pre-season lottery. Most heavily used properties allocate hunting locations for a few days each week of the season in this way. These chances are made available by filling out a form that is available at Fish and Wildlife properties in late August. Most other hunting sites are made available through a daily drawing on each property.

Weekends and holidays are always the most crowded. At these times, utilize the smaller, less used areas. Many smaller areas allocate blinds on

a first come basis and may have days when very few hunters show up, yet still have huntable populations of waterfowl.

Once you have been successful at obtaining a hunting location, you can use a few tricks to increase your hunting success. The best trick is to make sure that waterfowl don't know you are there. Cover your hands and face with a camo net. If a drake can see a hen in the marsh from hundreds of yards out, how visible are you? Clean the area before hunting. Waterfowl will flare from pop cans, candy wrappers, and trash of all kinds in a heavily hunted area. Hide your boat well away from your hunting area or cover it completely.

I once flew a marsh in a helicopter and could see faces, hands and the flash of the brass from the floating shot shells around blinds. I was at a much greater height than ducks fly in the marsh and ducks have keener eyes than most biologists. Remember that heavily hunted areas require more attention to detail.

A final tip is to learn restraint. More trips have been ruined by high shooting than anything else. Many times I have watched ducks turned from the marsh by hunters who think that if they can just use a little larger gun or hotter shell they can reach out.

High shooting will ruin even the best marsh. I have seen waterfowl all around these same blinds when vacated. I have also seen waterfowl nesting in blinds that high-shooting hunters claimed were no good.

Remember you are where these birds want to be, the key is to be as inconspicuous as possible, expending large numbers of shells is like yelling at every duck in the marsh.

If you will follow these few tips your hunting will be much more productive and enjoyable.



Preparation, location, anticipation – waiting for the whistle of wild wings overhead.

Prepared by Glenn McCormick, property manager, Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Area

focus on *Wild crafts from wild fur*

Quality hats are easy to make out of raccoon or coyote pelts

Furs were an important part of survival and the economy in early Indiana. Fur clothing kept native Americans and settlers protected against cold winters. Trapping was the heart of the region's economy.

Today, regulated trapping still provides benefits to wildlife and people of Indiana by controlling over-abundant animal populations. And today, abundant wild animals are still used for food and clothing.

You can experience traditional fur craft skills by making your own "free trappers hat." Use a pelt that you've harvested yourself, or purchase one from a commercial supplier. You'll be amazed at your hand-stitched hat's warmth and comfort.

What you'll need:

- Pelt(s) – coyotes are large enough to make a hat for even the biggest head. For small animals, you may need more than one pelt.
- Leather needle
- X-acto knife or razor blade
- Sinew
- Pencil

Instructions:

1. Lay fur out flat and trace pattern on hide side with a pencil paying close attention to how the fur will lay on the finished hat. It's generally best to cut the top piece out of the shoulder/back area of the pelt. Cut the sides so that the fur lays long-ways.

2. Cut the pieces out using a razor blade or X-acto knife. As much as possible, cut the hide and not the fur. Do not use scissors.

3. Mark the front/center point on the top of the hat (where it will be on the center of your forehead). This is where you will start stitching. Place



Make a fur hat to suit your personal style. Anita Owens is ready for the coldest winter outing or finest social event with her comfortable and conservative coyote hat. Mark Pochon crafted his hat to model his mountain man style.

the corner of one of the side pieces at this starting point with the fur sides of each piece together. Using a whip stitch, sew the side piece around the top piece until you reach the center of the back of the hat. Use the needle to push the fur out of the way as you stitch.

4. Tie off the sinew in the back. Now, connect the other side starting again at front/center and

stitching all the way around.

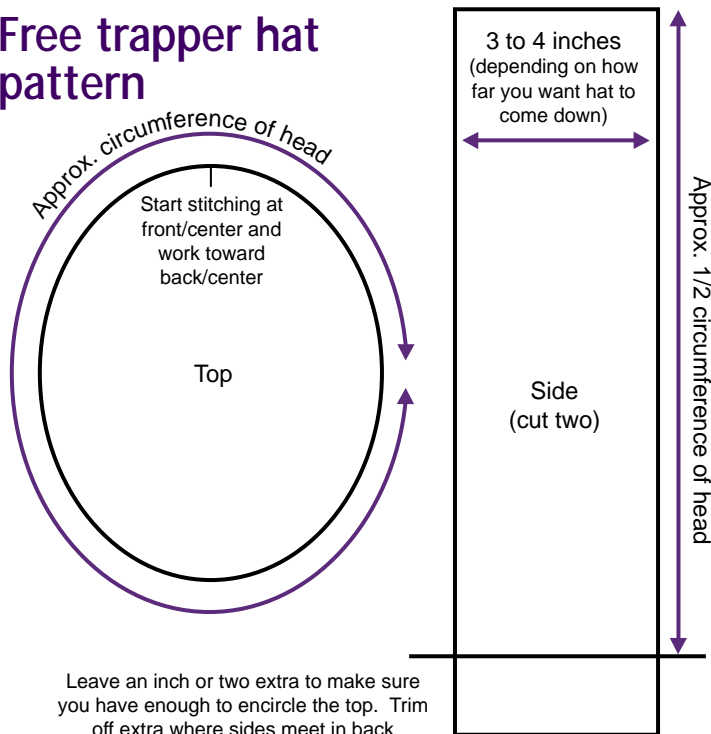
5. When you meet the other side piece in the back, use a razor to trim off excess, then stitch the two side ends together. Stitch the side ends together in the front also.

6. Attach tail or face to hat as desired and you're done.

If you'd like to line the hat with fabric, just use the same pattern, only make it slightly smaller. Sew it together the same way you constructed the hat, then stitch it into the hat.

Prepared by Jon Marshall, public affairs chief

Free trapper hat pattern



Furs, leather needles and sinew are available at:
Stroudsburg Fur & Leather
Phone: (570) 421-6704
Website: www.furskins.com
E-mail: furskins@ptd.net

Hat patterns are available from:
Missouri River Patterns
Phone: (903) 786-2287
Website: www.crazycrow.com
E-mail: crazycrow@crazycrow.com

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